

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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DIME NOVEL SKETCHES NO. 44

THE HEARTHSTONE

A story paper published by "The Hearthstone Company," 268 and 270 South Ninth Street, Philadelphia, Pa. This publisher in all probability was in reality James Ilverson under a publishing pseudonym. It began November 25, 1882, and ceased publication with Vol. 4 No. 10 when it was absorbed with *Saturday Night*. This was a total of 166 issues. It was published weekly with black and white illustrations in standard story paper format, 16½x11½ inches, with 8 pages. It sold for 6c per copy or \$3.00 per year.

A Partial History of the Brett Publications

By Ralph Adimari

When Edwin John Brett started *Boys of England* first issue dated November 27, 1866, he gave a new direction to the Penny Dreadful literature of the British Isles. Part of this direction reached into the heart of the American Dime Novel through Frank Leslie's *Boys' and Girls' Weekly* where somewhat more than 50 serials were reprinted from Brett publications mostly from *Boys of England* and *Young Men of Great Britain*. In this vast republication venture were included the fabulous Jack Harkaway by Bracebridge Hemming. Previous to Brett, boys' publications were issued to interest boys from the upper classes and consequently because of their narrow scope none succeeded. Brett however aimed at the middle classes and working boys and with this shrewd reasoning, *Boys of England* was an immediate success running as high as 125,000 per week in less than a year. This was the first such success in juvenile history including the United States.

The first editor of *Boys of England* was Charles Stevens who wrote numerous serials for it. As editor, Stevens lasted only a couple of months for with the 11th issue dated February 4, 1867, *Boys of England* lists Edwin J. Brett as sole editor. From this time forward Brett only listed himself as editor, conductor and publisher of all his publications. His cup overfloweth for *Young Men of Great Britain* started January 29, 1868, was equally successful although not ever taking the place of the glamorous *Boys of England* which published the hero of English Boys, Jack Harkaway for the first time in late 1871. This was perhaps

the greatest event in juvenile literary history. (A paper on Jack Harkaway is in preparation: Editor's note).

While Brett gave little information on his papers, Cambridge Bibliography says Vane J. St. John, brother of Percy B. St. John, was an editor for *Young Men of Great Britain* but gives no dates. Two others could have been co-editors on one or various of the many Brett publications. One was John Cecil Starg, author of *Chevy Chase*, a very popular story for many years among the teens and who started with Brett from the first issue of *Boys of England*. The other was "Tom Floremall" who took up the formidable task of writing the Jack Harkaway stories after Bracebridge Hemming left Brett and went to New York to write Jack Harkaways for Frank Leslie's *Boys' and Girls' Weekly* in late 1873. Another was James Greenwood, who had been a kind of editor in his early writing days. He had been engaged by Brett because in a column Greenwood had carried on a steady campaign against penny dreadfuls. Then Greenwood became a long and steady writer of penny dreadfuls, some reprinted by Frank Leslie. Due to the secrecy of Penny Dreadful publications, all we can do is guess at just who ran the papers and book publications of many of these serial publications.

After Hemming's defection in late 1873, soon Brett refused to give author's credits and by lines except only to a very popular author such as Captain Mayne Reid and James Greenwood but so bitter he became that he rarely if ever engaged popularly known authors, preferring to engage unknown ones as in the case of "Tom Flore-

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mall" second string author of the Jack Harkaway stories. One of these was a noted English or Scottish physician who probably was the first to write Dr. Kildare, Ben Casey type of story virtually 100 years ago, William H. Hillyard. One of his stories was cast in a hospital in Edinburgh, Scotland, called "Jack Randall, the Doctor's Boy," April 17, 1870, in *Young Men of Great Britain* and reprinted faithfully in *Frank Leslie's Boys' and Girls' Weekly* starting August 6, 1870.

In the case of the signing of Captain Mayne Reid to a contract to write for Brett it must be studied in a separate paper to find out the complexities of this engagement. There is a conflict of interest between Beadle and Brett. Both claim exclusive rights to publish these same stories by Reid. But since Reid was presumably residing in New York City in those days it would seem that Beadle had the exclusive right to publish the novels, not Brett. The latter claimed at first, 1867, exclusive rights to the Mayne Reid novels but admits in June 1868, "Mr. Edwin J. Brett alone has the right of publishing, in England . . .". By inference he proves Beadle to be right. Another writer for Brett was Thomas Frost the country journalist who revealed this information in a book, London, 1886. Two of these serials, *Tom Lester* and *Life in a Circus* were reprinted in *Boys' and Girls' Weekly* in New York. Thomas Frost in this book (*Reminiscences of a Country Journalist*) opines that there was little difference between penny dreadfuls and high class juvenile literature. In this case it must be admitted that Frost may not have read the early penny dreadfuls, published mainly by Edward Lloyd and several others in the 40's and 50's. Lloyd's novels especially were vicious, bloody, sometimes bitterly anti-Catholic that even when read today makes one shudder. Lloyd, who might be called the father of English penny dreadfuls, later on when he became a respectable business man attempted to collect his published books and destroy them. Since there are few left today he may have suc-

ceeded to a certain degree.

While it is true that Brett had brought the Penny Dreadfuls to a respectable level he also introduced Buffalo Bill to England. Buffalo Bill became not only a household name in the British Isles but the most beloved figure of foreign extraction in the last quarter of the 19th century. The English people grappled him to them with props of steel. It is claimed that The Buffalo Bill Show could have lasted there for years and years. It ended only for one reason in the 80's, fear of war among the European nations. Exactly on February 21, 1870, Brett reprinted in his *Boys of England* from New York Weekly the Ned Buntline story Buffalo Bill, the King of Border Men. It was of course following Brett's usages by now published anonymously from an American publication. The serial Buffalo Bill was given a royal welcome because it contains vivid portraits of Buffalo Bill and his fellow frontiersmen. Another serial was reprinted by Ned Buntline (Hazel Eye, the Girl Trapper), from New York Weekly, into *Young Men of Great Britain*, Vol. 8, 1871, but also anonymously. These are the only two serials found by me republished from American papers into Brett publications in the early years.

While Brett was busy aggrandizing himself, he thought up an idea new to juvenile publication (1868). This was to give prizes to his readers, clocks, clothing, small furniture such as is given today with trading stamps. The idea was heavily publicized and while it may not have been a total success, enabled the shrewd Brett to create good will for his publications. In this period he had as illustrator a man with the formidable name of Esmond HEBBLETHWAITE. Another important first for Brett was the issuance of his two most important weeklies, *Boys of England* and *Young Men of Great Britain*, some seven years after their first publications in 1873 so that a boy could buy the new issue as well as a weekly reprint issue of the same *Boys of England*, 2 per week. This went on for many years and was imitated by

George Emmett with his publications. (A paper on George Emmett and his publications is in the offing, Editor's Note.)

It was George Emmett who chose to wear the mantle of England's conscience when Brett violated Bracebridge Hemyng's rights to ownership of the name and stories of Jack Harkaway. George Emmett reprinted the stories of Hemyng's Jack Harkaway written for Frank Leslie in New York City. In doing so, Emmett severely castigated Brett for claiming the Harkaway stories as his very own and denying Hemyng had written any for him. After Hemyng left him, then Brett committed a betrayal for in 1874 and 1875 a serial was published lasting a full year called Jack Harkaway and His Son's Adventures Round the World, but claimed to be edited by Edwin J. Brett. This was tantamount to saying "I, Edwin J. Brett, wrote it." But it was in fact written by a pseudonym "Tom Floremall", whose true name I have been unable to solve. Brett himself never wrote a serial before nor was he capable of writing a penny dreadful. One had to have a know-how to write one. Brett could spy a first class penny dreadful as far as his eyes could reach but he was totally incapable of putting one together. He did write some factual articles here and there but that was as far as he went. The by line used by him was deception pure and simple and this was a slick way to get credit for authorship not in any way belonging to him. The "war" between Brett and Emmett went on for about a decade and ceased about 1885 when Emmett died. Worthy and wonderful man that Emmett was, he had in the course of the Crimean war (I believe) taken up the curse of alcohol and he died an untimely death.

Another first that Brett accomplished although this might be questioned by some, was the colors in his publications. In 1867 in Boys of England he had his supplements, the illustration in colors, not the usual black and white pictures that juvenile weeklies had adhered to all those years

before. While none of these were in sequence, Brett finally put out a boys' publication, Boys of the Empire, in 1888 which was colored from cover to cover each week. But this weekly which republished old serials from Boys of England and Young Men of Great Britain under different titles, did not last for long. By this time, Brett was faltering due to severe competition from younger publishers. Besides the above mentioned Boys of the Empire, Brett had put out the following weeklies—

Boys of the World	1869
The Boys Favourite	1870
Our Boys' Journal	1876
Boys' Comic Journal	1883

He also started Harkaway House about 1874 or 1875 for his book publications to counter Hogarth House under which name Emmett issued all Jack Harkaways written by Hemyng, while Brett issued only Harkaways written by "Tom Floremall" and the few Hemyng had first written for Boys of England before 1874. In 1893 Brett put out Jack Harkaway's Journal for Boys. But Hemyng did not write it. It failed the next year.

In my study of the business relations between Edwin Brett and Frank Leslie I am satisfied that Leslie did not pirate the serials he reprinted from Boys of England and Young Men of Great Britain. These more than 60 serials were reprinted in Frank Leslie's three boys' periodicals, Boys' and Girls' Weekly started in 1866, Boys of America, 1873; and The Young American, 1874. For faithful and methodical republication it was the most amount of stories reprinted from English periodicals into American counterparts. It started with a very famous serial, "Chevy Chase; or, The Battle of the Border" Nos. 39-59, 1867, by John Cecil Stagg in Boys' and Girls' Weekly reprinted from Boys of England, Vol. 1 No. 1, November 27, 1866, to No. 20, April 6, 1867. Many English experts without specific facts claim Leslie took them without pay. But from my study of publishing ways and the relations between Brett and Leslie, there is no doubt Leslie gave Brett

due compensation for them since Brett did not reprint anything from the Leslie publications except a 2 part story which Brett published in one issue. There was no other American publisher interested enough in Brett to compete with Leslie over the stories.

Now when Leslie took Hemying away from Brett not only did Brett respond with the statement that Hemying did not write the Jack Harkaway stories in Boys of England but immediately in early 1874 started a new serial about Jack Harkaway with the by line "Edited by Edwin J. Brett". This was not only a venomous slap at Hemying but was aimed without any regrets at his former associate Frank Leslie. But more than this, Leslie stopped (instantly) publishing serials in his Boys' and Girls' Weekly from the Brett publications from January 1874 on and while Leslie did republish a few serials in Boys of America and The Young American for 1874, he had ceased them in Boys' and Girls' Weekly. For some curious reason the following were republished in Boys' and Girls' Weekly after 1875.

Out with Captain Cook. Published by Brett in 1876, by Leslie in 1876-77.

Norman Kenricks. Brett, 1869, Leslie, 1877.

Captain Firebrand. Brett, 1872, Leslie, 1879.

Young Pickwick's Schooldays. Brett 1879, Leslie, 1879-1880.

Wild Tom of Cambridge. Brett 1873, Leslie, 1881.

Of the above 5, three came out before January 1874 so that they had been owed to Leslie, the other two are imponderables, they may even have been published without permission—Leslie probably thinking they would pay him for services rendered in ways we will never know.

When Edwin John (in one place, James) Brett died on December 15, 1895, one of his obituaries declared he "has done so much good for the boys of the United Kingdom by providing them with healthy and sensible journals and books." In none of the biographies I looked over did I find

one single mention of Bracebridge Hemying or Jack Harkaway, showing that Brett in the sunset of his life wanted to get as far away from his deed as he could possibly get. He left a fortune one might call it respectable and the cornerstone for this small fortune was none other than the publication of the Jack Harkaway stories. Hemying and Brett met head on and resulted in the most unfortunate tragedy in juvenile literature.

The End

LIKES AND DISLIKES IN BRAVE AND BOLD

By W. M. Burns

Last Summer I got in around 100 of my wants in Brave and Bolds and I now have close to 200 of them. Still have a long way to go as they run to 429 issues.

A prominent collector recently asked me what I saw in them to warrant collecting them. I replied to him that I liked them mostly because they contained so many rural stories. Stories of small country villages and life on the farm.

I could also have told him that I liked them for their many reprints from Beadles Half-Dime Library. Or the 31 stories about "Gordon Keith" and his helper "Checkers." These were from the Union Jack Library, with "Sexton Blake" and his helper "Tinker" under changed names. I have 24 of the 31 of these.

I liked Brave and Bold for its fine historical tales taken from "Golden Hours" and from "Boys of Liberty Library." The early issues contained stories (all reprints) of stories by Oliver Optic and Horatio Alger, but I never cared very much for either author.

Brave and Bold ended up by reprinting quite a number of "Motor Matt" and "Bowery Billy" stories. I never did like the "Matt" or "Billy" stories, but one must put up with them if they ever expect to complete a file of Brave and Bolds, I suppose.

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11	Saturday Night, by Denis R. Rogers. Ill.	2.00

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NEWSY NEWS

Ralph F. Cummings

161 Pleasant St., So. Grafton, Mass.

American Heritage Magazine had a fine number on the old 5c weeklies, of which was republished in several newspapers the last of October, on the Merriwells, as well as other old 5c dime novels, called 5 cent Adventures for Millions. They were sent in by Albert Johnson and others.

Lou R. Kohrt has just brought out new lists of old 5 and 10c novels, magazine and books for sale. He has some dandies.

Peter Scallo of Norwood, Mass., is enjoying all kinds of old timers of the days gone by, while his wife enjoys the collecting of dolls—a pair of collectors in the same family. Isn't that wonderful.

Remember Robert Calton Braun that used to write the old 5c novels, who died in August, 1957. His wife, Eleanor Parker Braun, 64, died on Oct. 26, 1961. They were working on a bibliography, Culinary Americana 1860-1960 at the time of her death—she and her late husband had been working on it together.

A funny thing happened, I received a letter from James Wm. Martin dated April 1st 1954, along about last of March or April, 1962—8 years after it was mailed it reached the editor of this column. Jim has been dead months. The letter must of been caught in a chute at the post office or somewhere all this time. Bill Burns says no doubt some postal clerk just found it, and mailed it on to me. Sure an odd one. First time it ever happened to me.

Hermion Pitcher says there were 8 or 10 versions of "Dora Thorne," written by Bertha M. Clay.

Information from William Gander, some time ago, I sent him a volume of the Union Jack that had Arthur Budge's name in it, from England. Bill sent it to another collector by the name of Len Packman in London. Len was quite intrigued, to find that they had once been owned by "dear old

Arthur Budge" and had been in the possession of W. H. Bradshaw before I got hold of it, some years ago. Sure is a small world!

W. H. Waldrop wrote some time ago that there was a fine article and two full page spreads on Frank Reade Library #108 and Happy Days, for August 1901 in the Fantastic Universe Mag, for Feb. 1960.

Ed Levy wrote to me, after I had written him, if he knew Judge James A. Shanley of his town, who is a collector of certain issues of the N. Y. 5c Library. Says they were both on the 1914 New Haven High School Debating Team.

Eli Messier had a very good writeup in the Woonsocket Call for Jan. 28, 1961. Hope he landed something good from it, as some times people will write in if they have something they think you can use.

CAPTAIN JACK CRAWFORD: "The Poet Scout" (1848-1917)

I am interested in buying copies of publications by Crawford and publications about Crawford. Condition of material unimportant. Please send titles and asking price to: Professor Paul T. Nolan, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Box 552, USL Station, Lafayette, La.

Back numbers Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Roundup, Nos. 1 to 237 for sale. Some reprints, all interesting, 12 for \$1.00 or all 237 numbers for \$18.00 postpaid.

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Boys & Girls Weekly (Leslie story paper). 905 numbers—all that were published—538 small, 367 large—\$600.00.

Deadwood Dick Library. (Ivers—3 colors). 64 numbers. \$12.50.

Young Men of America (Tousey story paper). #526 to 635, all that were issued in this size, 2 vols. Bound. \$85.00.

If you want a few single numbers, I can supply Bowery Boy, \$1.25 each. Motor Stories, \$1.00 each. Boys & Girls Weekly, small size, 3 for \$1.00; large, 75c each. Young Men of America, large size only, \$1.00 each. No singles of others.

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